HEALTH POLICY, MSPH

Program Overview
The Master of Science in Public Health (https://www.jhsph.edu/departments/health-policy-and-management/degree-programs/master-of-science-in-public-health-in-health-policy/) (MSPH) in Health Policy is a professional degree program designed for individuals seeking specialized academic training in health policy in order to establish or expand their careers in health policy. The interdisciplinary faculty associated with the program are recognized for excellence in policy analysis, health services research, public health practice, and teaching. The faculty are actively involved in formulating and implementing health policy at the federal, state, and municipal levels.

The program requires one year of full-time, residential academic coursework, followed by a 9-month field placement in a professional public health setting. Through their coursework, students acquire a solid foundation in public health policy along with substantive knowledge of the U.S. public health and healthcare delivery system. Students in this program will receive co-advising from both schools to optimize their academic experience.

Successful applicants to the Bachelor’s/MSPH are recommended to take at least one math or statistics course and at least one writing-intensive course during undergraduate study.

Requirements
Bachelor’s/MSPH degree applications should be submitted through SOPHAS Express by July 1st between the junior and senior years. Bachelor’s/MSPH students must be accepted before the start of their senior year. Please note that admitted Bachelor’s/MSPH students must complete their Bachelor’s degree before formally matriculating in the Bloomberg School of Public Health.

Bachelor’s/MSPH applicants must submit the following:

- Transcripts from Johns Hopkins University and, if applicable, transcripts from any other college-level institutions you have attended.*
- Three letters of recommendation.
- Resume or curriculum vitae.
- Statement of purpose and objectives.

*You may upload unofficial transcripts in the document section to expedite the application review process; however, admitted students must submit an official transcript before they can matriculate into the program.

For more information on the Bachelor’s/MSPH program, contact Assistant Director David Earle, or visit our website (https://www.jhsph.edu/departments/health-policy-and-management/degree-programs/master-of-science-in-public-health-in-health-policy/ba-msph.html).

MSPH Program Requirements
Course location and modality is found on the JHSPH website (https://www.jhsph.edu/courses/).

Year 1 Course Requirements
The MSPH in Health Policy program requires a minimum of 64 credits of didactic coursework to be completed in the first year of the program. Coursework includes program core requirements and electives. Students must complete a self-assessment and a tentative course plan prior to matriculating.

The program recommends completing all required online course modules in Year 1, but it is permissible to take some in Year 2 if necessary. All courses listed below, or the approved full-term substitute, must be taken prior to graduation. Half-term online modules (worth .5 credits) are offered multiple times throughout the year, including during the summer. Information on the half-term online courses available in the summer will be posted to the MSPH program orientation site. Online courses taken in the summer will be included in first term registration.

Core MSPH Courses

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<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PH.300.651</td>
<td>Introduction to the U.S. Healthcare System</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>PH.300.712</td>
<td>Formulating Policy: Strategies and Systems of Policymaking in the 21st Century</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PH.301.645</td>
<td>Health Advocacy</td>
<td>3</td>
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In addition to the core course curriculum, MSPH in Health Policy students must take elective courses in order to meet the first year 64 credit requirement. Elective options should be discussed with the academic adviser prior to registration. Students may take the opportunity to specialize in a specific area of policy. Specialty areas include:

- Advocacy
- Child & Adolescent Health
- Food & Nutrition Policy
- Health Disparities & Health Inequality
- Health Finance & Management
- Bioethics
- Environmental Health Policy
- Health & Aging Populations
- Health Economics
- Health Informatics

Electives

Students are eligible to initiate their placement after meeting all of the following requirements:

- Earned a minimum grade of "C" in all required core courses
- Completion of the required 64 program didactic credits
- Satisfactory academic progress with a minimum overall GPA of 2.75 by the end of the 4th term of their first academic year
- Earned a minimum grade of "C" in all required core courses

The minimum length of a field placement is nine cumulative months. Many students begin their field placement employment in the summer after the first year of coursework, although students are not required to begin their field placement until the first day of the first term in their second year. The nine-month field placement requirement can be completed at one or multiple sites domestically or internationally.

Field Placement Goals

The field placement experience provides students with the opportunity to apply their academic training in real world settings under the guidance of at least one senior-level health policy/public health professional and the program faculty. Through the field placement experience, students will gain perspective on how public health policies affect the public's health and hone their professional health policy skills. During their employment, students are expected to accomplish the following objectives:

- Develop practical, applied public health policy skills including but not limited to: problem analysis, oral and written communications to various audiences, and quantitative analysis to advance evidence-based policy decisions.
- Contribute to their field placement organization by participating in and completing all assigned work. Where appropriate, share work with field placement colleagues, and suggest additional projects in support of the organization's mission.
- Discern their own role in the organization as to how their work fits both into the mission of the organization and within the "larger health policy system."
- Explore the internal structure, function and history of the organization and its impact on the organization's mission and operations.
- Observe the preceptor's leadership and managerial approach and implications of these leadership approaches on the student's field placement experience as well as their overall career advancement and development.
Selection and Approval of Field Placement Sites
Students may choose to pursue field placements in a wide variety of settings, including governmental agencies, the legislative arena, consulting, advocacy, non-profit, research and professional organizations in both domestic and/or international settings.

Students are responsible for securing their own field placement positions, with assistance and final approval from MSPH staff and faculty. The program will disseminate field placement opportunities to students and they are encouraged to utilize existing MSPH partnerships with health policy/public health related employers via alumni contacts, recruiters, and established networking contacts. Additionally, students are encouraged to identify appropriate placements on their own. Placements can be domestic or international and can be completed in a single or multiple experiences. Students must submit an official field placement offer letter to the MSPH for final approval.

Field Placement Requirements
HPM faculty and staff oversee the evaluation of the field placement as a culminating experience. During the field placement, students are experienced to chronicle their professional practice developments in health policy/public health, as well as synthesize and integrate knowledge and competencies acquired in their coursework through the completion of four (4) pass-fail assignments. Details and due dates for these assignments will be provided to the students at the beginning of their 2nd year.

Evaluation Of Student’s Completion Of The Requirement: Preceptor
Each preceptor is asked for feedback on the student’s performance through the completion of a brief evaluation form near the end of the students’ placement.

MSPH Program Policies
MSPH Program Prerequisites
1. All students must complete Introduction to Online Learning, which is offered through the Center for Teaching and Learning at the Bloomberg School. This non-credit course is a pre-requisite that must be completed in the summer prior to matriculation.
2. All students must take the required course PH.550.860 Academic & Research Ethics at JHSPH. This is an online offering that must be completed in the summer prior to matriculation. Failure to complete this course will prevent students from registering for 2nd term.

Master’s Tuition Scholarship
The MTS provides eligible MSPH students with a tuition scholarship worth 75% of one year’s tuition. The scholarship can be applied either in the second year of the program or applied to both years as described on the Program Overview page. Students must declare which option they prefer in the summer before matriculating into the program. Once they have declared their preference, they will not be able to change preferences. Upon completion of the field placement, the scholarship will be concluded. Students are not permitted to enroll in courses using the scholarship once they have completed the program.

Any student enrolled in the MSPH in Health Policy who does not maintain the minimum 2.75 GPA by the end of the 4th term (or upon completion of all required course work) may be prevented from initiating their 2nd year field placement. In this situation, the program directors, in consultation with the HPM Student Matters Committee, will determine the appropriate course of action.

HPM Policy on Course Waivers
In rare cases, courses may be substituted for one or more of the requirements listed above. Any exception request must be submitted in writing according to the guidelines outlined below at least one week prior to the start of the academic term and be approved in writing by the MSPH Program Director.

Examples of when a substitution might be appropriate:
• A student has successfully completed a graduate level course with a grade of “A” or “B” that covered the same content areas as the required course. (The completed graduate-level course syllabus must be submitted with the request.)
• A course or series of courses fulfills a general area of the required curriculum, such as biostatistics or program evaluation, but the student wishes to take a different course or series that is equally or more advanced than the normal requirement and that better aligns with their overall academic and career goals.

Course substitutions must abide by the following principles:
• A strong rationale must be made for how the substitution will benefit the student’s overall academic and career goals.
• The resulting curriculum meets the requirements of a CEPH-accredited professional program focused in U.S. health policy.

Procedure for making a substitution request:
• The request for substitution must be submitted to the Program Director and Assistant Director in writing at least one week prior to the substituted course is to being.
• The student must have completed a course plan prior to submitting any course substitution request.
• A brief rationale for the substitution must be provided in writing.
• A completed course-by-course curriculum plan for the degree must accompany the request.
• Approval or denial will be provided by the Program Director or Assistant Director within one week of being received. Decisions on course substitutions may not be appealed, as such, students should be prepared to complete the required curriculum if the request is denied.

HPM Guidelines for Student Employment
Full-time master’s students who work for the Bloomberg School are eligible to work a maximum of 19.99 hours per week during each academic term. During periods of academic non-enrollment (i.e., summer, spring break, etc.) student employees may work up to 40 hours per week. This work hour limit does not apply to the Year 2 field placement.

For FICA TAX purposes, “summer” begins on June 1st and ends on the last day of August prior to the first day of Term 1. During this time, students may work up to 40 hours per week.
MSPH Learning Outcomes

Program Competencies

The competencies specific to the MSPH in Health Policy are met through coursework and a 9-month field placement. Upon successful completion of the program, students will have mastered the following program competencies:

• Evaluate critically the sources of vulnerability and related policy approaches to improve health and social outcomes in a specific vulnerable population.
• Appraise the range of policy mechanisms that can be used to improve health and social outcomes among vulnerable populations.
• Assess the feasibility of translating a good policy idea into a viable policy option.
• Apply skills and knowledge about policy formulation to advance health and social policy initiatives.
• Describe the legal principles that underlie health policy formulation.

CEPH-Defined Foundational Competencies for Professional Programs

The curriculum for the MSPH in Health Policy program includes coursework that has been approved to meet the introductory Public Health Knowledge Learning Objectives (https://e-catalogue.jhu.edu/public-health/ceph-requirements/) identified by CEPH and the 22 CEPH-defined foundational competencies (https://e-catalogue.jhu.edu/public-health/ceph-requirements/) for public health professional programs.